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ABSTRACT

Two years of work by the 95th Congress (1977-78) are examined with regard to programs and issues which have implications for lifelong learning as a national policy. (Lifelong learning is defined as that policy or combination of policies which contribute to and/or encourage learning by persons throughout their lives in a variety of formal and informal environments.) Topics reviewed are the Lifelong Learning Act enacted by the 94th Congress (Part B of Title I of the Higher Education Act); work-related lifelong learning (career education, welfare reform, The Comprehensive Employment and Training Act--CETA, employer tuition assistance, educational leave); lifelong learning for special groups (elderly, handicapped, preschoolers, adults, women); aid to individuals for lifelong learning (tuition tax credits); executive branch reorganization (Department of Education); renewal of education programs (community education, basic skills); and budget and appropriations. The author concludes that there is increasing recognition of the importance of providing access to learning for Americans of all ages and circumstances. Failures are attributed to a complex of political and bureaucratic factors extending into the broad realm of social and economic policymaking. Actions of the 96th Congress will be dependent, she says, on shifts in committee assignments, administration budget proposals, and the general trend toward reduction of federal regulation and spending--and on the fact that lifelong learning is not an isolated and discrete movement or interest. (JT)

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LIFELONG LEARNING and the U.S. CONGRESS 1977–78

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ABOUT THE AUTHOR ...

Ellen S. Hoffman developed an interest in lifelong learning while serving as an aide to Senator Walter F. Mondale on the Human Resources Committee. In that capacity she worked with a number of education and other organizations on the drafting of what became the Lifelonge Learning provisions of the Higher Education Act (Part B, Title I).

While serving as professional staff member and staff director of the Senate Subcommittee on Children and Youth from 1971 to 1977, Ms. Hoffman worked on a wide variety of domestic issues. Previous to working in the Senate, she was an education and urban affairs reporter at The Washington Post.

In May, 1977, Ms. Hoffman became the Director of Governmental Affairs for the Children's Defense Fund. She continued her personal interest in lifelong learning by presenting legislative updates to IEL's Postsecondary Education Convening Authority monthly lifelong learning dialogue and assisted in the preparation of the 1978 report to the Congress on lifelong learning. Ms. Hoffman is also an adjunct faculty member in the education policy department of the University of Southern California Washington Education Center, and serves on HEW Secretary Califano's Committee on the Rights and Responsibilities of Women, and on the Presidentally-appointed National Advisory Council on Women's Education Programs.

PREFACE

One day in 1975, a Minnesota constituent paid a routine visit to the Washington office of the senior Senator from his state, Walter F. Mondale.

Often constituents visit their elected representatives in the hope that they will be able to get something from them--a recommendation for a job, a federal grant, a ticket to a White House tour.

This particular constituent, however, was selling something--an idea. The idea was that the U.S. Congress should acknowledge that human beings learn throughout their lives, that they can and do learn in a variety of formal and informal circumstances, and that existing Federal policies recognized these facts in only the most haphazard and sporadic manner.

This constituent talked in terms rarely, if ever, heard in the halls of Congress before. He talked about "multi-generational learning" and said that he was part of something called the "Minnesota Learning Society" which was exploring ways of expanding the boundaries of human learning.

The desirability of offering education to persons younger or older than age 5 to 21 in institutions and programs outside our traditional educational system had, of course, occurred to the Congress before. The Federal Government was already heavily invested in programs such as those authorized under the Adult Education Act; Head Start (for pre-schoolers); Agricultural Extension; Community Service and Continuing Education, and many more.

But there was something about the way Dan Ferber, a former college dean and professional baseball player, talked that illuminated the fact that no matter how much the Federal Government was doing and no matter how much it was spending on these programs, these actions somehow did not add up to a creative and comprehensive policy.

Ferber's visit to Mondale's office touched off a series of events--a speech, a Senate hearing and extensive collaboration among interest groups--which resulted in the drafting and enactment of Part B, the lifelong learning authority of Title I of the Higher Education Act, in 1976.

In the months between Ferber's visit and the enactment of Part B, the terms "lifetime learning" and "lifelong learning" were heard more and more frequently on Capitol Hill. Members of Congress and their staffs gradually became aware of a growing movement which was already well known to professional educators, gerontologists and specialists in the study of human development--but previously unknown to these policymakers.

For the first time, a lively dialogue developed between these groups and their representatives and the nation's policymakers over the concept of lifelong learning.

The lifelong learning movement and its attempts to articulate a national policy have been plagued by the difficulty of defining the term lifelong learning both broadly and precisely. For purposes of the discussion in this document, lifelong learning is that policy or combination of policies which contribute to and/or encourage learning by persons throughout their lives in a variety of formal and informal environments.

This definition is based on the notion that Federal policy on lifelong learning is the sum of a complex of Federal programs and policies affecting access to learning opportunities; as well as the content of learning; the clients; and the system or systems which deliver educational services.

It was this concept which to a large extent guided the development and operation of the Institute for Educational Leadership-Postsecondary Education Convening Authority's "Dialogue on Lifelong Learning" which met in Washington from 1976 to 1978.* The Dialogue provided a forum for presentation and discussion of a range of lifelong learning proposals, programs and theories by researchers, practitioners, and policymakers.

One regular feature of the monthly dialogue was the presentation of a "legislative update" concerning actions proposed or taken by Congress or the executive branch with respect to lifelong learning policy. This document is an attempt to summarize two years of activity by the 95th Congress,** both in terms of specific programs and in terms of cross-cutting issues, such as government reorganization and budget policies.

It should be said that neither legislators nor the policymakers in the executive branch addressed the notion of lifelong learning systematically or made it a priority in the 95th Congress. This document simply attempts to describe, by analyzing them through "a lifelong learning filter," the actions and inactions of the 95th Congress which have implications for lifelong learning as a national policy.

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*The Dialogue and other PECA activities were funded largely with funds granted by the Fund for the Improvement of Postsecondary Education, HEW.

**The 95th Congress convened in January, 1977, and adjourned in October, 1978.

LIFELONG LEARNING ACT

The new authority enacted by the 94th Congress in Part B of Title I of the Higher Education Act could be described, at best, as modest.

It defines lifelong learning in a comprehensive and ambiguous way and authorizes the Assistant Secretary of Education (ASE) to, in effect, examine existing Federal efforts in lifelong learning and enhance them through coordination, information and clearinghouse activities, and evaluations. The ASE was also given authority to "assess, evaluate the need for, demonstrate and develop alternative methods to improve" such nuts and bolts of the learning society as curriculum, facilities, research, and guidance and counseling techniques.

Congress authorized expenditures of $20 million for fiscal 1977, $30 million for 1978, and $40 million for fiscal 1979 for these activities.

The 1977 budget prepared by the outgoing Ford administration did not contain a request for funds for the lifelong learning program, nor did the amendments hastily prepared by the Carter administration in its early weeks in office. However, it was decided within the Department of Health, Education and Welfare (HEW) to set aside funds from "salaries and expenses" accounts to create a small core staff to carry out some of the studies authorized by the legislation. This staff worked through 1977 and 1978 on the salary and expense funds and produced a report, "Individuals, Learning Opportunities and Public Policy: A Lifelong Learning Perspective", in response to a requirement in the law for a report to Congress by January 1, 1978.

For 1979, the administration requested $5 million from Congress for implementation of Part B.

However, no money was provided at all in the appropriations bills approved by the Congress. The small staff assembled for the project dispersed, and with the authorization for the program facing reconsideration by the 96th Congress, this lack of funding raises a basic question about whether the authority will or even should continue to exist.

WORK-RELATED LIFELONG LEARNING

Career Education: In the first year of the session, Congress completed action on and the President signed a new Career Education Act designed to replace and expand the program created in 1974.

The new program aims mainly at expanding efforts on the elementary and secondary level, but also contains a special authority of $15 million annually for "postsecondary education demonstration projects". Eligible funding recipients include institutions of higher education, public agencies and nonprofit private organizations. In order to qualify, they must develop programs considered to be of

"national significance", or to offer "unusual promise" in the area of guidance and counseling, particularly with reference to overcoming "bias and stereotyping on account of race, sex, age, economic status or handicap."

The program is authorized through fiscal 1983 and will be administered by the existing Office of Career Education in the U.S. Office of Education (U.S.O.E.).

Welfare Reform: An extensive debate over welfare reform--including job training policies and requirements and their relationship to income support programs--opened in September, 1977 when President Carter announced his "Better Jobs and Income Act". However, as the session progressed both welfare reform proposals and controversies about them proliferated until House Speaker Tip O'Neill (D.-Mass.) finally announced that the 95th Congress simply would not have time to complete action on a major welfare reform package.

Thus changes in Federal job training policies and programs occurred as a result of action on the Comprehensive Employment and Training Act (CETA) authority, rather than as part of a comprehensive welfare reform package.

CETA: A number of new provisions written into the CETA Act by the 95th Congress are designed to place much greater emphasis on providing training for the unemployed and underemployed.

For the first time, every participant in the public service employment program will have to be provided with some type of training. Prime sponsors will be required to spend a minimum percentage of their funds on training, starting at 10 percent in 1979 and growing to not less than 22 percent in 1982.

The "Special Federal Responsibilities" section of the law was amended to expand and strengthen language authorizing training and related services for target groups including offenders, Native Americans and migrants. In addition, displaced homemakers were added to the list of persons eligible for these services.*

It is expected that a maximum of $5 million will be available for implementation of the displaced homemakers program the first year.

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*The law defines a displaced homemaker as a person who "(A) not worked in the labor force for a substantial number of years but has, during those years, worked in the home providing unpaid services for family members; (B) (i) has been dependent on public assistance or on the income of another family member but is no longer supported by that income, or (ii) is receiving public assistance on account of dependent children but is within 6 months of no longer being eligible for such assistance; and (C) is unemployed or underemployed and is experiencing difficulty in obtaining or upgrading employment".

A new CETA Title VII, "Private Sector Opportunities for the Economically Disadvantaged", is intended to encourage the business community and industry to expand and increase the effectiveness of training they offer. Other CETA changes relevant to training are:

- A series of new state plan requirements designed to ensure coordination and cooperation between traditional education agencies (especially vocational education agencies and programs) and CETA prime sponsors; and

- An increase from $90 to $120 million in the set-aside for for programs to be operated by vocational education agencies.

Employer Tuition Assistance: The Revenue Act of 1978 signed by President Carter contains new provisions aimed at reversing and clarifying Internal Revenue Service policies which previously treated employer educational assistance as taxable income for employees. Particular concern had been expressed that the policy was a disincentive to upgrading existing skills or acquisition of new ones which might lead to promotions or other jobs.

The new tax law establishes specific criteria for operation of education assistance programs, including a prohibition against discrimination against requiring various categories of employees to make a choice between educational assistance and other benefits.

Educational Leave: Although no action was taken, the 95th Congress had before it legislation proposing the establishment of "reemployment rights for workers who temporarily relinquish employment to pursue education or child care". The bill, introduced by Senator Donald Riegle, (D.-Mich.), was directed at employees in interstate commerce. It would have allowed them to take leave for up to 5 years and, when they returned to their jobs, to "retain all seniority, and all rights and privileges attached thereto, unless the employer's circumstances have so changed as to make it impossible or unreasonable to do so".

LIFELONG LEARNING FOR SPECIAL GROUPS

A series of existing programs aimed at assisting particular target groups received considerable attention in the 95th Congress because they were expiring and required renewal.

Some of the legislation in this category consists of programs whose purpose is not primarily education, but which have implications for lifelong learning. For example, although the Older Americans Act contains authority for funding educational programs, most of the funds are used for nutrition programs and for coordination and delivery of a variety of social and other direct services.

The Elderly: In amendments to the Older Americans Act, Congress continued to treat education as one of a complex of social services needed by the elderly, and not as an area of special emphasis.

The new law creates a consolidated social services authority which includes "continuing education" (along with health, transportation, legal services, etc.) as one of the services which can be provided by a state. Authorizations for the program are $300 million for FY 1979, $360 million for 1980, and $480 million in 1981.

Under a new discretionary projects section, certain types of education projects for the elderly could be supported. These are projects which would "provide continuing education to older individuals to enable them to lead more productive lives by broadening the educational, cultural or social awareness of such older individuals, emphasizing, where possible, free tuition arrangements with colleges and universities"; and "provide retirement education information, and relevant services (including training personnel to carry out such programs) to individuals planning retirement".

The need to develop a trained corps of personnel in the field of aging is also addressed by the new law. It calls for establishment of a "national manpower policy for the field of aging" to be developed and implemented through coordination of Federal, state and local resources: and requires the Commissioner of Aging to assess personnel and training needs--particularly those for advocates for the elderly and for meeting the needs of service providers in rural areas.

A new piece of legislation specifically designed to increase educational opportunities for the elderly was introduced by Rep. Claude Pepper (D.-Fla.), in the 95th Congress but received no action. The bill would have provided grants to higher education institutions willing to enroll persons over 60 on a tuition-free basis. The Federal share would have been 55 percent of tuition costs, 5 percent of which was targeted to provided information and other types of outreach efforts.

The Handicapped: The Rehabilitation Services Amendments of 1978, renewing the Vocational Rehabilitation Act, contain several new education-and training-related provisions. They are:

.Creation of "Comprehensive Rehabilitation Centers", receiving 80 percent federal funding, which provide a "broad range of services to handicapped individuals", including educational services.

.Establishment, in collaboration with higher education institutions, of "rehabilitation research and training centers" whose functions include improvement and expansion of training of rehabilitation personnel and rehabilitation research personnel.

.A new pilot program of training and employment of handicapped persons by business and industry.

.Creation of "centers for independent living" offering a variety of services, including training, needed by a handicapped person to "live independently and function within his family and community and, if appropriate, secure and maintain appropriate employment".

The educational needs of handicapped persons are also addressed in the CETA amendments. Changes include: a requirement that prime sponsors include employment and training plans for the handicapped in their annual plans; and establishment of training programs for personnel to work with the handicapped.

Pre-School Children: Although lifelong learning is most often thought of in terms of adults, a comprehensive approach to lifelong learning also recognizes the importance of early childhood development to future educational success. Children who most need early childhood education in the narrow sense are often those who also need health, medical, social and other developmental services in order to progress in the educational system.

Early childhood programs and policy received cursory attention in the 95th Congress. Sen. Alan Cranston (D.-Cal.), held hearings on the need for child care in his Subcommittee on Child and Human Development, and also announced his intention to introduce a child care services bill in the 96th Congress.

Early childhood education amendments were attached to both the House special welfare committee's welfare reform bill and to the Elementary and Secondary Education Act. The welfare reform proposal, introduced by Rep. Andrew Jacobs (D.-Ind.), would have provided $126,000 nationally for model programs offering in-home and in-school services for children 8 months to 36 months old. It died with the welfare reform bill.

The ESEA amendments authorize a new "pre-school partnership program" of "cooperative pilot projects between local educational agencies and Project Head Start...which will provide a smoother and more successful transition to normal schooling for certain pre-school-aged children..."

The projects, which would involve 3-and 4-year olds, would provide educational services to the child in his or her home; or other "early childhood and family education programs" including identification of barriers to learning. At least 10 percent of the

Commissioner of Education's discretionary funds is reserved for this program, but it is hard to predict the exact funding level because the law provides for "such sums as are necessary", rather than a specific amount for the Commissioner's discretionary funds.

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The new version of the Rehabilitation Services Act also focuses on the needs of pre-school children, authorizing the new rehabilitation research and training centers to conduct research and demonstration programs to develop methods of providing services for handicapped pre-schoolers. Among the services to be considered are language development, parent counseling and early intervention.

Adults: Changes made in the Adult Education Act during the reauthorization process signal Congress' new willingness to look to sponsors outside the traditional educational system for assisting adults in acquiring basic skills.

The new law will allow public and private nonprofit agencies, organizations and institutions to operate programs if they have consulted with and received the comments of the local educational agency (LEA) on their program applications. Previously, only LEA's and private nonprofit agencies were eligible.

In submitting state plans, states will now be required to describe the procedures through which they will ensure "adequate consultation, cooperation and coordination" among the various educational agencies and programs in the state; as well as how they will expand "significantly" the delivery of services through business, labor unions, libraries and other channels outside the public school system.

Women: In 1972 Congress passed Title 9, prohibiting discrimination on the basis of sex in Federally funded education programs.

Partly because of a long delay in developing a Title 9 enforcement effort and partly in response to a study documenting widespread sex discrimination in Federal programs and in the Federal

education offices themselves, Congress in 1974 created the Women's Educational Equity Act (WEEA). Purpose of the law was to provide support to individuals, groups and institutions trying to develop methods of establishing "educational equity". The program provided both for activities which would provide equity at the elementary and secondary levels; and for trying to redress the effects of such earlier discrimination on adult women.

Funded at less than $10 million each year, WEEA has focused on supporting efforts--including curriculum development, training, etc.--which could serve as national models.

The 95th Congress made significant changes in the program during the reauthorization process. The new law provides for continuation of the existing general authority for activities "at all levels of education, including pre-school, elementary and secondary education, higher education and adult education".

However, once these activities are funded at the level of $15 million, the new legislation requires that all subsequent funding be used to assist in achieving compliance with Title 9. A full 75 percent of funds spent under the new authority must be awarded to local education agencies, suggesting that the emphasis in coming years will be on achieving change within the traditional educational system, giving less priority to the needs of adult women who face such problems now.

A more targeted approach to bringing women into the educational mainstream was reflected in the "Women in Science and Technology Equal Opportunity Act" introduced by Sen. Edward Kennedy (D.-Mass.).

The bill would have created a variety of mechanisms for increasing the participation of women in science and technology, including fellowships, continuing education, research and a "clearinghouse on women in science". No formal action was taken on the bill.

AID TO INDIVIDUALS FOR LIFELONG LEARNING: Tuition Tax Credits

One of the most hotly debates issues of the 95th Congress was the question of whether to create a system of tax credits for students in elementary, secondary, vocational and higher education.

The initiative for tuition tax aid came from the Congress. The Senate had actually approved proposals for a credit for higher education in several previous sessions. But in the 95th Congress the House Ways and Means Committee agreed to hold hearings on the subject for the first time.

As Congress moved quickly on its own proposals, the administration countered by proposing instead that extra funds be pumped into existing higher education assistance channels such as the

Basic Educational Opportunity Grant program. The upshot of a long and intricate series of moves was Congressional approval of a bill authorizing credits of up to 35 percent of tuition for students at higher education and postsecondary vocational schools.

Throughout this long debate, only the most minimal consideration was given to whether additional student assistance should be provided--either through tax credits or through grant and loan programs--to adults. The bill originally introduced by Senators Robert Packwood (R.-Ore.), and Daniel Moynihan (D.-N.Y.), would have provided credits for graduate and part-time students. However, this section of the bill was hardly even discussed in the hearings before the Senate Finance Committee, and no similar provisions were included in the bills considered by the House.

An important reason for this lack of serious attention was undoubtedly the budget implications of such a credit. The administration's opposition to tax credits from the beginning relied heavily on the fact that no funds had been provided in the budget for them. As political pressure for elementary and secondary as well as higher education credits intensified, Congress clearly felt it would be out of the question to also move ahead with new funding for older students.

Similarly, the Congress did not give any meaningful consideration to expanding the use of existing student aid programs to make them more accessible to older and/or part-time learners. Neither the administration's proposal for expansion nor the legislation enacted contemplated such changes.

EXECUTIVE BRANCH REORGANIZATION: The Department of Education

The administration's proposal to create a cabinet-level Department of Education was passed by the Senate but died in the last days of the 95th Congress when the House did not complete action on it.

As in the case of the debate over tuition assistance, the concept of lifelong learning was most notable for its absence from the extensive debate surrounding the proposed creation of a Department.

The Senate-passed bill would have added the community education program to existing occupational, adult and vocational programs to form a new unit--the Office of Occupational, Adult and Community Education. The Senate Governmental Operations Committee report stated that it intended this new unit to work closely with training programs administered by the Department of Labor and that "preparation of adults and older Americans for access to education and work" would be a priority mission as well. However, the office actually outlined in the Senate bill would not have had jurisdiction over the many other programs which would be relevant to accomplishing the broad mission stated in the report language. The bill reported by the House Committee would have created a new unit

to administer postsecondary education programs, but that committee's report did not even discuss the implications of this administrative move.

There is no evidence that the planners of the Office of Management and Budget, the Congress or the interest groups that testified before the Congress addressed the extensive and difficult organizational questions implied by a national commitment to lifelong learning. Such lines of thought could have included: improving the relationship between existing Federal programs supporting adult learning; fashioning an organizational structure that would be more comprehensible both to consumers and to the state, local and institutional authorities who implement the programs; and structuring a department which would focus some attention on the impact that a lifelong learning orientation would have on the structure and content of traditionally sequenced education programs.

RENEWAL OF EDUCATION PROGRAMS

Community Education: The 1978 amendments provide for a major expansion and reshaping of the old community school program into a new Title VII, "Community Schools and Comprehensive Community Education Act of 1978".

Purpose of the expanded program is to encourage the use of schools and other public buildings as centers offering a wide range of educational and other community services for persons of all ages.

Most of the new funds would go to state education agencies which meet a series of requirements including development of a 10-year plan for "coordination of education programs with all relevant community services". Funds could be used to support programs for various target groups including handicapped persons, adult and juvenile offenders, and pre-school children. Funds could also be used to match other Federal funds secured through programs including the Public Health Service Act, the Headstart-Followthrough Act, Title XX (the social services program) of the Social Security Act, and a number of others.

Between $40 and $60 million--with a minimum of $50,000 to eligible states--is authorized for each of the next five years for state programs; and smaller set-asides are provided for direct funding of local education agencies and other public agencies and nonprofit private organizations.

The new legislation also requires the Assistant Secretary for Education and the Director of the National Institute of Education (and provides $1 million for each of the next five years) to carry out a research program on community education; and authorizes expenditure of between $5 million and $15 million for each fiscal year through 1983 to be used for training community education personnel.

Basic Skills: Strong Congressional concern about the need to improve students basic skills resulted in creation of a new authority for several types of activities, including operation of "reading academies" for adults as well as children and youth. These adult programs can be operated by state and local educational agencies and various types of nonprofit organizations and agencies, including labor unions, business associations and volunteer organizations.

BUDGET AND APPROPRIATIONS

Because reauthorizations were completed very late in the Congressional session, no appropriations were provided for a number of lifelong learning-related programs including CETA and the Older Americans Act.

The proposed increase of $1.2 billion in education funds in the budget requested by President Carter for 1979 was targeted almost entirely for elementary and secondary programs. $256 million of the increases was slated to go into student aid programs. By the end of the session, when Congress had approved the Middle-Income Student Assistance Act, (proposed by the President later in the session), approximately half a billion dollars was added to existing student assistance programs for fiscal 1979.

Two small education programs of particular interest to the lifelong learning community were "zeroed" in the President's budget; and in both cases Congress ulitmately agreed to provide funds. One is the Educational Information Centers program, funded at $2 million in fiscal 1978, which will receive $3 million in 1979. The other is the community services and continuing education program (Title I of the Higher Education Act), which ended up with $16 million, a cut of $2 million from 1978.

Although the administration requested $5 million for the lifelong learning section of the Higher Education Act, no funds were provided by Congress.

Most other lifelong learning--related programs will not experience a drastic change in funding level from fiscal 1978 to 1979. The community schools program, funded at $3.5 million in 1978, will receive $5.4 million. Women's educational equity will increase nearly $1 million to $9 million; the teacher centers program will increase more than $4 million to $12.6 million; and the budget of the National Institute of Education (which conducts research on lifelong learning) will increase $2.3 million to $92.3 million.

Programs which were not reauthorized in time to receive appropriations continue to operate at the 1978 level until the 96th Congress takes action on supplemental appropriations legislation.

SUMMARY

The 95th was not particularly a "lifelong learning Congress".

The conceptual and political breakthrough which resulted in creation of Title I, Part B in the 94th Congress was more dramatic and seminal than anything that occurred in the 95th. But this breakthrough did lay the groundwork for what appears to be increasing recognition of the importance of providing access to learning for Americans of all ages and circumstances; and of adapting public policies to meet the demands and challenges placed on our educational resources by the new groups of learners.

This change in attitude can be seen in a series of changes in existing laws and programs undertaken by the 95th Congress. Such changes include broadening the delivery system in the Adult Education Act and emphasizing provision of educational services to pre-schoolers, the aging and other new clienteles in the community education program. These represent incremental steps toward official sanction for creation and support of a new and far broader educational effort in this country.

The failures of lifelong learning in the 95th Congress--such as not providing funding for Title I, Part B and the lack of interest in fashioning a Department of Education responsive to the implications of lifelong learning--are attributable to a complex of political and bureaucratic factors, the implications of which extend far beyond lifelong learning and into the broad realm of social and economic policymaking. They are less a repudiation of the concept of lifelong learning than an indication of the difficulty of:

1) achieving systems reform when it is identified as such; and

2) uniting very diverse and fragmented interests in pursuit of a mutual goal at the same time they perceive that their own, narrower turf is threatened (by budget cuts, reorganizations, program consolidation, etc.).

LIFELONG LEARNING AND THE 96th CONGRESS

A number of lifelong learning-related issues debated by the 95th Congress can be expected to arise again in the 96th. In addition, the expiration and pending renewal of the Higher Education Act (HEA) will provide a forum for discussion of the future of such key authorizations as Title I (the continuing education and lifelong learning authorities) and student assistance.

Among the top unresolved issues from last year will be 1979 appropriations. With so many domestic programs operating on continuing resolutions, and with the trend toward fiscal conservatism in both Congress and the executive branch, spending decisions will likely be both late and undramatic. It is also likely that the many unfunded HEW and Labor Department programs will all be considered in one supplemental appropriation bill, which could require months of consideration. The closer the final decision is to the beginning of the new fiscal year (October 1 1979), the easier it will be for Congress to adopt spending levels which do not exceed the 1978 levels.

The two most controversial education issues of the 95th Congress--tuition tax credits and creation of a Department of Education--will probably be considered again in the 96th Congress. If advocates of elementary and secondary education credits again press for Congressional consideration of their proposals, the whole concept of tax credits could again become a subject for spirited Congressional debate. The Department of Education issue has also been raised again by the administration, which submitted a revised version of its proposal early in the new Congress. (Senate committee approval was voted on March 14, 1979.)

The scope and nature of attention and activity on the lifelong learning provisions of HEA is uncertain. This section of the legislation is expiring, and whether it survives or is significantly changed will probably depend on whether interest groups previously supportive of the program develop and work on the Hill for a consensus position. As of the end of the 95th Congress--with original author Senator Walter F. Mondale no longer present as an advocate on the Senate Education Subcommittee--no other member had emerged as the champion of Part B.

The future of Part B will also undoubtedly be affected by decisions concerning such closely related programs as Title I, Part A (community services and continuing education) and Title X (community colleges), which has never received funding.

The nature and effectiveness of Federal student assistance programs--BEOG's, the Guaranteed Student Loan program, etc.--are expected to be the subject of intense scrutiny and debate during reauthorization proceedings in the 96th Congress. One of the issues expected to arise is whether programs should continue to serve primarily young, dependent and full-time students or whether eligibility requirements should be broadened to increase opportunities for older and part-time students.

The degree and nature of interest of the 96th Congress in lifelong learning may be influenced by the interests and committee assignments of the new members, as well as shifts in assignments of incumbents.

At least three specific factors are likely to have an important effect on the attitude toward and final record of the 96th Congress in lifelong learning: shifts in committee interests and assignments; interaction with the administration's budget proposals; and the general political trend toward reduction of Federal regulation and spending.

Committee Shifts

In the early weeks of Congress, the following shifts in committee membership and leadership had emerged:

1. Appointment of Rep. John Ashbrook (R.-Ohio) to the position of Ranking Minority Member of the House Committee on Education and Labor. Ashbrook replaces Rep. Albert Quie (R.-Minn.), who resigned to run (successfully) for Governor of Minnesota. Ashbrook has been a vocal critic of many existing Federal education policies and programs.

2. Selection of Rep. William Natcher (D.-Ky.) as chairman of the Labor-HEW Subcommittee of the House Appropriations Committee. He is expected to look less favorably on expanded education funding than his predecessor, Rep. Daniel Flood (D.-Pa.), did in the many years he chaired the Subcommittee.

3. Appointment of Rep. Paul Simon (D.-Ill.) as chairman of the House Subcommittee on Select Education, replacing Rep. John Brademas (D.-Ind.), who stepped down to undertake leadership responsibilities in the House. Simon, who has exhibited an interest in lifelong learning in the past, will not have jurisdiction over either adult or postsecondary education programs, but his subcommittee retains authority over the National Institute of Education legislation.

4. Designation of Sen. Richard Schweiker (R.-Pa.) as Ranking Minority Member of the Senate Labor and Human Resources Committee. Schweiker replaces Jacob Javits (R.-N.Y.), a long-time supporter of education who has a particular interest in the relationship between education and work. Schweiker is expected to take a more conservative stance toward authorization and funding of new legislation.

5. Appointment of several new members of the Senate Appropriations Committee, most of whom are expected to be fiscally conservative. In addition, Sen. Edward Brooke (R.-Mass.), the most outspoken advocate of lifelong learning on the the committee in the past, was defeated in his primary election contest.

The Budget

The submission of the President's budget to Congress in January set the stage for a long and complex debate on budget issues in 1979-80. Most of the education programs seen as particularly important to lifelong learning would continue at about their current level of funding if the President's budget were adopted. As in 1979, Mr. Carter did not request funding for the lifelong learning authority in Title I, Part B of the Higher Education Act.

The following chart summarizes the 1978 and 1979 appropriations levels and compares them with the President's request for Fiscal Year 1980 for a number of key lifelong learning programs.

	FY 78 Approp.	FY 79 Approp.	FY 80 President's Request
Lifelong Learning (Title I, Part B, Higher Education Act)	-----	-----	-----
Adult Basic Education	$ 90.7	$ 100.	$ 90.7
Basic Educational Opportunity Grants	$1,600.	$2,400.	$2,400.
Community Schools	$ 3.5	$ 5.4	$ 3.1
Career Education	$ 10.1	$ 32.5	$ 10.1
Community Services and Continuing Education	$ 18.	$ 16.	$-----
Educational Information Centers	$ 2.	$ 3.	$-----
Improvement of Postsecondary Education (FIPSE)	$ 12.	$ 13.	$ 14.
National Institute of Education	$ 90.	$ 92.3	$ 98.2
Teacher Centers	$ 8.3	$ 12.6	$ 13.
Women's Educational Equity Act	$ 8.	$ 9.	$ 10.

Political Trends

What Congress actually does with lifelong learning issues presented by this budget will be heavily influenced by more general trends toward restraining Federal expenditures. Perhaps the biggest factor and also the biggest unknown for lifelong learning in the 96th Congress will be the same as that for the future of most domestic policy issues--the implications of the 1978 election results.

Many of the new Members of Congress campaigned as fiscal conservatives and as persons deeply committed to enhancing the role of state and local governments and reducing the influence of the Federal government. It is possible that their election will be felt not only in the way Members choose their issues and vote in the new Congress; but in the meaning that these election results have for more senior members of Congress who will respond to apparent shifts in the political winds.

Early in 1979 it seemed that these political trends would be played out most extensively in the arena of budget decisions and that a premium would be placed on: a) support of existing programs which can be proven cost-effective, and b) withdrawal of support from those producing dubious results and c) withholding support from new ventures.

In the area of education generally and lifelong learning in particular, this could mean a continuation of the trend in the 95th Congress toward emphasizing paperwork reduction and improved administrative provisions, and a lack of emphasis on educational innovation.

The fact is that lifelong learning is not an isolated and discrete movement or interest. This is part of the difficulty of measuring the progress or decline of the concept in the public policy arena. In terms of politics and policymaking, lifelong learning is only one of many subordinate concerns to be addressed in the context of broader goals of social and economic policy.

Individuals, organizations, elected officials and the administration could make something happen on lifelong learning in the 96th Congress. But what they can do is limited not only by their energy and their will, but by the political context in which the lifelong learning game must be played.

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TAP maintains a network of state-level "generalists" (Associates) whose ties to IEL in the nation's capital provide rare linkages among federal and state education policysetters. TAP encourages similar linkages among agencies and coalitions seeking to improve processes in state-level decisionmaking. It also sponsors national and regional conferences dealing with state-level responsibilities in education.

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